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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4239th meeting of the Security Council, held on 29 November 2000, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Guinea-Bissau", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reiterates its support for the democratically elected Government of Guinea-Bissau, and underlines that all parties concerned, especially the members of the former military junta, must continue to uphold the results of the elections and the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and civilian rule in the country.

"The Security Council welcomes the return to peace, democracy and constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, and urges all parties to work towards the consolidation of peace in a spirit of cooperation and reconciliation.

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction the political progress made so far in Guinea-Bissau, and stresses the importance of continued cooperation by all parties towards the consolidation of sustainable peace in Guinea-Bissau. The Council calls upon the members of the former military junta to subordinate themselves fully to the civilian institutions and to withdraw from the political process. The Council underlines that the primary responsibility for the consolidation of peace lies with all the parties and the people of Guinea-Bissau and is concerned that renewed political unrest may be harmful to the consolidation of peace and to the commitment of donors to support the reconstruction of Guinea-Bissau.

"In this connection, the Security Council underlines the importance of an energetic continuation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and the need for an urgent and accurate census of all military forces. It recalls the statement of its President of 23 March 2000 (S/PRST/2000/10), and underlines that timely funding for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is a critical factor to the successful implementation of the peace process in Guinea-Bissau. The Council commends the support provided by the Bretton Woods institutions to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in Guinea-Bissau, and stresses the importance of the coordinated support of Member States for these activities.

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"The Security Council recalls the statement of its President of 29 December 1998 (S/PRST/1998/38), and recognizes that the challenges of the post-conflict situation in Guinea-Bissau require an integrated and consolidated approach by all actors to support the Government of Guinea-Bissau, including the United Nations system, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as bilateral donors. In this regard, the Council once again underlines the importance of ensuring a smooth transition from conflict management to post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction, which can be greatly enhanced through adequate coordination of the efforts of all. The Council stresses the special position of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) in this regard.

"The Security Council recognizes and commends the important role played by UNOGBIS towards helping consolidate peace, democracy and the rule of law, including the strengthening of democratic institutions, and expresses its appreciation for the activities of UNOGBIS. In order to optimize the efforts of UNOGBIS, some degree of flexibility on the part of donors and financial institutions is required concerning issues such as debt relief, trade policies and internal budget constraints.

"The Security Council reiterates that economic rehabilitation and reconstruction constitutes one of the major tasks facing Guinea-Bissau as it emerges from conflict and that significant international assistance is indispensable in promoting sustainable development there. The Council underlines that an integrated and coordinated approach is required for Guinea-Bissau combining sustainable post-conflict peace-building and economic and development issues.

"The Security Council calls upon Member States to provide generous support at the next round table scheduled for February 2001 in Geneva.

"The Security Council acknowledges the relevance of the regional dimension. It welcomes the initiatives the President of Guinea-Bissau and the President of Senegal have taken towards stabilization of their common border region. The Council encourages both Governments to explore further possibilities to achieve peace and stability along the regional borders. It commends the Economic Community of West African States and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries for their continuing contributions towards the return of peace and democracy in Guinea-Bissau.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to keep the situation in Guinea-Bissau under regular review and to coordinate with all actors in the post-conflict peace-building process."